
A New Species of *Solanum* sect. *Micracantha* (Solanaceae) from Venezuela

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ABSTRACT. While preparing the genus *Solanum* for the *Flora of the Venezuelan Guayana*, W. G. D'Arcy and I discovered *Solanum nuricum* M. Nee, sp. nov., among collections made in the northeastern part of the region.

Solanum nuricum M. Nee, sp. nov. TYPE: Venezuela. Bolívar: Altiplanicie de Nuria, vicinity of Deborah, summit of SE-facing escarpment, E of Cerro El Picacho, N of Las Nieves and Las Chicharras, 45 km N of Tumeremo, 600–650 m, 5–8 Feb. 1961 (fl, fr), *J. A. Steyermark* 89242 (holotype, NY; isotypes, F, MO).

Liana lignosa alte scandens, ferruginea-tomentosa, aculeis uncinatis recurvis armata. Folia alterna, obovata, nonnunquam elliptica, 7–14 cm longa, 2.5–6 cm lata, subtus ad nervum aculeis parvis recurvis obsita. Inflorescentia simplex, racemosa, cymosa, ca. 10-floribus, terminalis dein recta lateralisque. Corolla caesia, stellata, lobis lanceolatis 15 mm longis, 6 mm latis. Antherae attenuatae, 11 mm longae. Ovarium tomentosum. Fructus globosus, tomentosus, 15 mm diametro.

High-climbing woody *liana* or sometimes apparently merely shrubby; twigs woody, terete, to at least 9 mm diam. and probably much larger, with prominent raised cordate leaf scars, the bark brown, smooth, lenticellate, with sessile and short-stalked ferruginous porrect stellate hairs, the rays 5–6, ca. 1 mm wide, the stalk to 0.5 mm long, the midpoint 0.5–1(–2) mm long, armed with recurved prickles 1–5 mm long, the enlarged, compressed base to 5 mm long. *Leaves* alternate, obovate or sometimes elliptic; blade (6–)7–14 cm long, 2.5–6 cm wide, acute to rounded at unequal base, acute to acuminate at tip, the margin entire or obscurely repand, not revolute, somewhat glossy and dark green above, paler below, sparsely tomentose above with sessile porrect stellate hairs, or some on midrib and major veins short-stalked, the rays 3–5, often very short, nearly obsolete, the midpoint 0.5–1.0 mm long, below with coarser sessile and short-stalked porrect stellae, the sessile ones mostly with 4 rays ca. 1.2 mm wide, the short-stalked stellae often with up to 7 and more ferruginous rays, armed below on midrib

with a few small broad-based prickles to 2 mm long, the longer ones recurved, firmly membranaceous, the lateral veins 6–8 per side, curved. *Petiole* 8–16 mm long, with tomentum as on the midrib below and usually with recurved prickles. *Inflorescence* terminal, soon overtopped and lateral, extra-axillary, racemose, 2–7 cm long, the peduncle 2–3 cm long and tomentose like the stem; buds in helicoid cyme at the tip, the rachis becoming straight as flowers develop; flowers ca. 10; pedicels 5 mm long in anthesis, 10 mm long in fruit, pilose; calyx campanulate, in anthesis the tube 5 mm long, the lobes 5, ovate-deltoid, acute, 5 mm long, in fruit the lobes 1 cm long, 6 mm wide, nearly glabrous within, pilose on outside with brown-ferruginous or brown-purple porrect stellate hairs, these drying yellow-brown, sessile or short-stalked, with short or obsolete rays and an elongate 2–4-celled midpoint; corolla stellate, without interpetalar tissue, pale lavender to lavender-purple, ca. 3.5 cm wide, the tube very short, the lobes lanceolate, 6 mm wide at base, 15 mm long, glabrous within, tomentose on outside along the midrib with sessile or short-stalked porrect-stellate hairs, the distal margins densely and minutely puberulent; stamens 5; filaments very short; anthers ca. 11 mm long, gradually tapering; style ca. 14 mm long, exceeding the anthers by 1–2 mm; stigma capitate, 1 mm long; ovary tomentose with sessile porrect stellae, those toward the tip often with midpoint to 2 mm long. *Fruit* a globose berry, 1–3 developing toward end of inflorescence, ca. 1.5 cm diam., or possibly somewhat larger when fully mature, green, mature color not known, sparsely tomentose; seeds flattened, reniform, foveolate, ca. 3.5 mm long.

Habitat. Growing in edges of savannas and woods and in cloud forests, from 320 to 650 m altitude, known only from the Altiplanicie de Nuria in the State of Bolívar on the border with Territorio Federal Delta Amacuro.

Solanum subg. *Leptostemonum* sect. *Micracantha*, essentially the “*Solanum lanceifolium* group” of Whalen (1984), consists of about 20 viny species characterized by exclusively cat-claw prickles on the

stem and on the main veins of the lower leaf surface. Like almost all other groups of New World *Solanum*, the section is much more diverse and species-rich in South America than in Central America, Mexico, and, especially, the United States. The many Central American and northern South American collections of section *Micracantha* have often been placed under the name *S. lanceifolium* Jacquin; but in the floras of Veracruz, Mexico (Nee, 1993), and the Venezuelan Guayana, these collections have been divided into four closely related species: *S. lanceifolium*, *S. adhaerens* Roemer & Schultes, *S. aturense* Dunal, and *S. tampicense* Dunal. There are several additional ill-defined species closely related to them in the Amazonian region.

Solanum nuricum differs from the core of the "*Solanum lanceifolium* group" by having unifoliate rather than difoliate, geminate sympodia, i.e., leaves single rather than geminate at a node, and a tomentose fruit. It most closely resembles *S. rupicola* Sendtner of Bahia and Espírito Santo in eastern Brazil, from which it differs by thinner, nonrevolute-

margined leaves, smaller fruits, and wider calyx lobes. These two species belong among the more peripheral groups of section *Micracantha*, mostly Brazilian, whose relationships with the "*Solanum erythrotrichum* group" (Whalen, 1984) have not yet been clarified.

Paratypes. VENEZUELA. **Bolívar:** Altiplanicie de Nuria, 5 km from Hato de Nuria, E of Miamo, 10 Jan. 1961, *J. A. Steyermark* 88283 (NY, US); Altiplanicie de Nuria, between camp and Agua Linda, 7 km E of Hato de Nuria, E of Miamo, 14 Jan. 1961, *J. A. Steyermark* 88438 (NY, US); near the border (= Río Grande o Toro) with Territorio Federal Delta Amacuro, ca. 8°4'N, 61°44'W, 11 Apr. 1964, *F. J. Breteler* 3768 (NY, VEN), 21 Apr. 1964, *F. J. Breteler* 3882 (MER).

Literature Cited

- Nee, M. 1993. Solanaceae II. *Solanum*. Flora de Veracruz, Fascículo 72. Instituto de Ecología, Xalapa, Mexico.
- Whalen, M. D. 1984. Conspectus of species groups in *Solanum* subgenus *Leptostemonum*. *Gentes Herb.* 12: 179–282.